

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 8311

EXDIS

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PARTY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, US, ENRG

SUBJECT: DEUTCHE TIDE INCIDENT: AMOCO REQCTION TO IDF VERSION

REF: STATE 197042 AND TEL AVIV 5451

1. EMBOFF HAS DISCUSSED GOI VERSION OF DEUTCHE TIDE INCIDENT WITH AMOCO VP CAMPBELL. CAMPBELL RESTATED HIS FULL FAITH IN CAPTAIN FALGOUT, MASTER OF DEUTCHE TIDE, WHOM HE REGARDS AS HONEST AND EXPERIENCED SEAMAN. CAMPBELL IS SATISFIED THAT BUOY IS WHERE FALGOUT SAYS HE SET IT. AMOCO CAIRO HAS REQUESTED PERTINENT ENTRY FROM SHIP'S LOG AND EXPECTS TO HAVE THIS FOR US TOMORROW.

2. IDG ALLEGATION THAT DEUTCHE TIDE CARRIED US CITIZEN CAPTAIN AND 13 EGYPTIANS IS, CAMPBELL SAYS, ERRONEOUS. SENIOR CREW MEMBERS, INCLUDING MATE AND ENGINEER, ARE AMERICANS; EGYPTIANS ARE SERVING AS DECKHANDS.

3. "MORGAN CITY" WHICH, ACCORDING TO GOI VERSION, WAS DISPLAYED AS NAME OF SHIP, IS NAME OF DEUTCH TIDE'S HOME PORT IN LOUISIANA. FURTHER, IDF CLAIM THAT DEUTCHE TIDE WAS NOT FLYING AMERICAN FLAG CONTRASTS NOT ONLY WITH CAPTAIN FALGOUT'S ACCOUNT BUT ALSO WITH AMOCO'S STANDING ORDERS FOR ITS US
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REGISTERED SHIPS OPERATING IN THE GULF. ISRAELI SKIPPER'S

REPORTED REMARK THAT DEUTCHE TIDE HAS NO BUSINESS ON EAST SIDE OF "MEDIAN LINE" IS OBJECTIONABLE TO AMOCO; FIRST, ONGROUNDS THAT SHIP WAS ON WEST SIDE OF GULF, AND SECOND, BECAUSE AMOCO, LIKE USG, HAS NEVER RECOGNIZED LEGAL EXISTENCE OF ANY MEDIAN LINE. FURTHERMORE, AMOCO HAD ALREADY DRILLED IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY EAST OF CONTESTED LOCATION, AND IN JANUARY CARRIED OUT SEISMIC STUDIES EAST OF NEW DRILLING AREA.

4. CAMPBELL REITERATED CRITICAL ECONOMIC POSITION IN WHICH ALLEGED ISRAELI ACTION HAS PLACED AMOCO. UNTIL MATTER IS SETTLED, AMOCO DOES NOT INTEND PROCEED WITH DRILLING OF THREE NEW WELLS IN AREA OF BUOY. ALL THREE OPERATIONS WERE SCHEDULED TO BE UNDERWAY WITHIN NEXT TWO WEEKS. DRILL SHIP SHILOH HAS BEEN MOVED TO "VERY SECOND-RATE" LOCATION IN LIEU OF CONTESTED AREA. THIS SECOND CHOICE COULD BE "ECONOMIC DISEASTER," CAMPBELL STRESSED, SINCE COST OF DRILLING WELL IS \$3 MILLION AND LOCATION IS MUCH LESS PROMISING THEN CONTESTED LOCATION. FURTHERMORE, GLOMAR III AND GLOMAR IV, THE TWO AMOCO DRILLING SHIPS FOR WHICH DEUTCHE TIDE HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO STAKE BUOYS IN SAME AREA AS FOR SHILOH, HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE LOCATION TO WHICH THEY MAY WORK. THEN DAYS FROM NOW, IF DISPUTE STILL UNSETTLED, AMOCO WILL BE PAYING \$120,000 A DAY TO MAINTAIN THESE SHIPS, NONE OF WHICH WILL BE OPERATING AS PLANNED.

5. CAMPBELL TOLD US AMOCO HAD HOPED THAT MATTER COULD BE CLEARED UP QUIETLY AND QUICKLY. IN VIEW CURRENT DELICATE DISENGAGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS, COMPANY DID NOT WISH GRATUITOUSLY OR UNNECESSARILY DISTURB DIPLOMATIC SITUATION. AMOCO ALSO BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT GOI SHOULD TAKE SAME PRECAUTIONS AT THIS DELICATE JUNCTURE. CAMPBELL, NOTING FALGOUT'S VIEW THAT ISRAELIS SEEMED VERY YOUTHFUL, SAID HE HAD THOUGHT THAT YOUNG CREW MIGHT HAVE GOT CARRIED AWAY AND ACTED ON ITS OWN. HOWEVER, SINCE IDF VERSION OF DEUTCHE TIDE INCIDENT DOES NOT AUGER WELL FOR SPEEDY RESUMPTION OF AMOCO OPERATION, CAMPBELL HAS DECIDED TO RECOMMEND THAT AMOCO TAKE UP MATTER WITH SENIOR LEVELS OF USG.
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